



**OCEANA**

Protecting the  
World's Oceans

PRESS RELEASE

Quezon City, Metro Manila  
P | +639189111267  
E | [gramos@oceana.org](mailto:gramos@oceana.org)

Facebook | [facebook.com/oceana.philippines](https://facebook.com/oceana.philippines)  
Twitter | [@oceana\\_ph](https://twitter.com/oceana_ph)  
[oceana.org](https://oceana.org)

## **OCEANA LAUNCHES IN THE PHILIPPINES; AIMS TO CURB OVERFISHING AND REBUILD STOCKS**

**Internationally acclaimed fisheries scientist, Dr. Daniel Pauly stresses  
urgent need for resource rehabilitation amidst evidence that 75% of  
fishing grounds in the Philippines are depleted**

Oceana, the largest international organization focused exclusively on restoring the world's oceans, is proud to announce the launch of its Philippine operation, which is led by Vice President Atty. Gloria "Golly" Estenzo Ramos. The international marine conservation organization is hosting a national symposium on fisheries – 'The road to sustainable fisheries governance' – November 3 and 4 to discuss various perspectives on the state of fisheries in the Philippines. A workshop among scientists on reconstruction of Filipino fisheries will follow the event.

*"In a nation where fishing is critical to the livelihood of millions, it is deeply concerning that more than 75% of our fishing grounds are depleted. Overexploitation has been driven by excess fishing pressure, a lack of coordination among agencies, destructive fishing and until recently, a lack of political will to implement the laws,"* stated Ramos, who added: *"I am honored to take the helm of this organization's work in the Philippines at a time when we can truly make a difference in our country and the region."*

Oceana board member Dr. Daniel Pauly who leads the "Sea Around Us Project" at the University of British Columbia, will be delivering the keynote address at the event. BFAR National Director Atty. Asis Perez will share the nation's strategic moves to counter illegal, unregistered and unreported fishing. Dr. Mike Hirshfield, Oceana's Chief Scientist and Strategy Officer speaks about Oceana and the Philippines. Stakeholders from the government and fisheries sectors, the justice system, academia, NGOs & POs and the business community, will spend two days discussing challenges, impacts, and reform proposals as well as sharing best practices in sustainable fisheries governance and effective law enforcement.

Dr. Pauly, who spent over 20 years living and working in the Philippines, stated that the country *"urgently needs to rehabilitate its fisheries resources and the statistical system by which catches are monitored."* Adding, *"this is difficult, but necessary if the present trends are to be turned around for the better."*

The Philippines is a heavily fish-dependent nation, ranking fourteenth in the world for fishing, with an annual marine catch of more than 2 million metric tons in 2011. Fishing is a critical livelihood support for the poor, with fisherfolk ranked as the poorest of the poor, and 44 percent of them having no other source of income. In the Philippines, there are over 1.3 million small-scale fishers and an estimated eight million people who depend on fisheries.

As the global demand for food continues to increase with the skyrocketing population – agriculture and livestock are limited in their ability to meet it. Arable land is decreasing on a per capita basis, fresh water is becoming increasingly scarce, and climate change is wreaking havoc on productivity. Wild-caught fish on the other hand, has several advantages compared to other sources of animal protein: it uses no land; needs negligible amounts of water (for processing only); is the lowest cost per pound to obtain; causes the lowest amount of carbon dioxide emissions per pound; and provides health benefits.

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**Gloria Estenzo Ramos**, Vice President

Quezon City, Metro Manila

**Mobile:** +639189111267 **E-mail:** [gramos@oceana.org](mailto:gramos@oceana.org)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/oceana.philippines](https://www.facebook.com/oceana.philippines) **Twitter:** @Oceana\_Ph

*Oceana is the largest international organization focused solely on ocean conservation. Oceana wins policy victories for the oceans using science-based campaigns. Since 2001, we have protected over 1.2 million square miles of ocean and innumerable sea turtles, sharks, dolphins and other sea creatures. Global in scope, Oceana has offices in North, South and Central America, Europe and Asia and more than 600,000 followers all over the world. For further information, please visit [www.oceana.org](http://www.oceana.org).*